

[News story: PHE spotlights nurses and midwives' roles in global public health](#)

An international audience has gathered at a Public Health England (PHE) nursing and midwifery conference in Liverpool today, Tuesday 14 May 2019.

The [Global Perspectives on Tackling Public Health Issues](#) conference celebrates the major contribution made by nurses, midwives and other healthcare professionals in improving the health and wellbeing of populations across the world.

The event brings together experts to share evidence and best practice, on how these professionals play a leading role in protecting health, preventing avoidable disease and promoting wellbeing globally.

The conference supports the global [Nursing Now](#) campaign and is taking place at Liverpool John Moores University on Tuesday 14 and Wednesday 15 May 2019.

From responding to emergencies and protecting vulnerable populations to promoting maternal health and tackling obesity, the event will highlight where nurses and midwives have led successful public health interventions, and explore how outcomes can be improved through prevention and early support.

The event will also address major current risks to global public health as defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO), exploring how nurses and midwives can help tackle antimicrobial resistance and how they can promote immunisation and speak confidently about the value of vaccines.

Professor Viv Bennett, Chief Nurse at Public Health England, said:

Nurses and midwives are the biggest workforce delivering healthcare globally. They make a vital contribution to tackling the complex public health challenges we face and to improving the health and wellbeing of people everywhere.

This conference gives us an important opportunity to share expertise with practitioners and clinical leaders from across the world so that we can support nurses and midwives to play an even greater role in preventing illness, protecting health and promoting wellbeing.

Hosted jointly with Liverpool John Moores University, the event will reflect on the importance of the city in pioneering nurse-led approaches to improving public health. Leading practitioners will outline their vision for enhancing the profile and status of nurses and midwives in global public health, and

how they can be supported to embed prevention into practice, with a focus on promoting the wellbeing of children and young people.

The event will also explore how managers and system leaders can maximise the impact of nurses and midwives, building on the work of the PHE-led Public Health Nursing and Midwifery WHO Collaborating Centre.

Contributions will feature from practitioners, academics, policy officials and Nursing Now ambassadors from across WHO member states, providing an opportunity for young nurses from across the world to meet and learn. Countries represented include the US, Canada, Argentina, Uganda, Zimbabwe and Pakistan.

Speakers include:

- Viv Bennett, Chief Nurse at Public Health England and Head of WHO Collaborating Centre for Public Health Nursing and Midwifery
- Mark Power, interim Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive, Liverpool John Moores University
- Professor Raphaela Kane, Interim Executive Dean and Director of Nursing and Allied Health, Liverpool John Moores University
- Ruth May, Chief Nursing Officer, NHS England
- Professor Kay Currie, Associate Dean, Research and Professor of Nursing, Glasgow Caledonian University and Head of WHO collaborating centre for AMR
- Rita Olans, Assistant Professor School of Nursing, MGH Institute of Health Professions, USA
- Sobia Idrees, Nurse Manager, Federal General Hospital, Islamabad, Pakistan

Press release: Football fans score extra time with HS2

As Manchester City and Watford fans prepare to travel to Wembley on 18 May, HS2 – Britain’s new high speed railway – will give football fans thousands of extra seats ahead of future cup finals, play-offs and England games.

Not only will there be extra seats, but fans planning for the match will save significant time on their journeys so they can make the most of their big day out.

Manchester City fans travelling from Manchester will save up to 2 hours on their journey to the capital. Knock-on benefits of the new railway will also see Watford Junction station get more frequent trains to London on the existing rail network.

Manchester City fans travelling from Manchester will save up to 2 hours on their journey to the capital.

The new high speed rail network will take the hassle out of travelling and mean fans can save their match day nerves for the stadium.

Allan Cook, HS2 Ltd Chair, said:

As a Sunderland fan, I understand the excitement of a final at Wembley. HS2 trains will enable fans to spend more time enjoying their big day out. Our trains will be more reliable, quicker and allow more fans to travel to the game by train.

The construction of HS2 is crucial to the delivery of other rail projects in both the Midlands and the North, which will mean that following your team by train will soon become easier. HS2 will free up space on existing lines, and up to 100 towns and cities are expected to benefit, meaning football fans across Britain will get extra rail services on match days throughout the season.

[Press release: Boost for housing market as Japan's biggest housebuilder, Sekisui House, moves into UK](#)



Japan's biggest housebuilder will move into the UK housing market with immediate effect after striking a multi-million pound deal that will see it work with Homes England and Urban Splash to deliver thousands of new homes across England.

- £90m investment boost to the UK housing market
- Sekisui take a 35% equity stake in Urban Splash's modular House business
- Investment will deliver new housing stock using modern methods of construction

Sekisui House, one of the world's leading housebuilders, are pioneers of modern methods of construction, where homes are built in factories and then shipped out to sites.

The £90m deal, which has been facilitated by lead real estate and financial advisor JLL, comprises a total new investment of £55m into regeneration company Urban Splash's 'House' development business. It provides a significant boost to the UK's modular housing industry and will help to speed up production of much-needed new homes.

Sekisui House have invested £22m of new equity, with £30m of equity and debt funding coming from the Government's Home Building Fund, administered through Homes England.

Experienced entrepreneur Noel McKee, founder of We Buy Any Car, has also made a sizeable investment in the new partnership and will take an incremental c 5% stake.

Yoshihiro Nakai, President and Representative Director of Sekisui House Ltd said:

"We are extremely pleased to be able to work together with Homes England and Urban Splash to establish our operations and help to create outstanding communities in the UK.

"Using modern methods of construction to build high quality homes with short build times is one of our company's great strengths. Our technology and know-how can help resolve pressing social issues in the UK, and I want to see us play our part effectively immediately. These operations can also help bring vitality to UK regions, and we will work to make the strongest connections with the local communities."

'House' is expected to deliver thousands of homes across England using modern methods of construction.

Minister of State for Housing, Kit Malthouse MP, said:

"Sekisui House bring with them a proven track record in harnessing the modern methods of construction that are transforming home building.

"Backed by Government investment, today's announcement will support our urgent mission to deliver more, better and faster home construction to ensure a new generation can realise the dream of home ownership."

Homes England, the government's housing accelerator, has been instrumental in providing significant financial support and expertise to the new partnership as well as providing assurance to the investors.

Sir Edward Lister, Chair of Homes England, said:

“When Homes England launched last year we said we’d disrupt the housing market to increase the pace of construction. By helping bring one of the world’s largest and most innovative housebuilders to UK shores, we’re putting our money where our mouth is.

“By creating a more diverse landscape – where smaller builders such as Urban Splash get a stronger foothold – we’re rebuilding the building industry; driving up quality and improving consumer choice.”

Tom Bloxham MBE, Chairman of Urban Splash, said:

“We believe that there is a real opportunity in the UK housebuilding industry. We hope to leverage our 25 years of place-making experience and our recent investments into modular housing by bringing in new partners; having looked far and wide we chose Sekisui House from Japan because of the company’s unrivalled global experience in modular construction and shared values and philosophy that we are making homes not units, and a joint belief in the need for a green future.

“We are also proud to partner with Homes England – part of the UK Government – because of their commitment to modular and desire to grow capacity in the UK housing business.

“We are incredibly excited about the accelerated production of much-needed homes and evolving traditional practices as we embrace the benefits of innovative offsite construction. I hope it will establish us as the housing partner of choice for landowners – both public and private.”

ENDS

For more information and interview requests please contact partners’ press offices on:

- Homes England on 0207 874 8262 or media@homesengland.gov.uk
- Sekisui House on +81-6-6440-3021 or +81-3-5575-1740 or [online](#).
- Urban Splash on 0161 214 0754 / 07763 614 987 or Leanne@cubedthinking.com

[News story: Thousands of schools to pilot new reception class check-up](#)

Over 9,600 primary schools have registered to take part in the pilot of the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA), the new 20-minute check that will provide a snapshot of pupils’ development when they start school.

The assessment will enable the removal of Key Stage 1 tests that currently take place at the end of year 2, reducing overall workload for schools. The change will also mean schools are recognised for the work they do throughout the whole of primary school rather just between years 2 and 6, as is currently the case.

Over half of eligible primaries will take part in the pilot, which will run this September and enable schools to familiarise themselves with the assessment before providing feedback to the Department for Education, ahead of the national roll out in 2020.

The assessment has been designed to reflect those that most schools already carry out in reception. It will take roughly 20 minutes, be carried out during one-to-one time with pupils, and does not have a pass mark.

School Standards Minister Nick Gibb said:

Just like checking a child's teeth or their eyesight, the reception baseline assessment is a quick check of a child's early language and ability to count when they start school. It will provide the baseline of primary school progress which is an important check of our school system, providing important information on schools' performance to make sure all children reach their potential.

The pilot is an opportunity for schools to familiarise themselves with the format and help us make sure it works for both children and teachers – that's why it's so significant that almost 10,000 schools have registered to take part.

The assessment will lighten the load for schools, which will no longer have to carry out whole-class assessments at the end of year 2 or deal with the test papers and administration that comes with that, while also being stress-free for children.

Schools will not receive individual scores for the assessment, instead getting a series of short, narrative statements that will say how each child performed, which they can use for informing teaching in the first term.

There is no reason for parents or teachers to prepare children ahead of the assessment. As such, carried out in the right way, children should not be aware an assessment is taking place. Progress data will be shared with schools following children's completion of Key Stage 2 tests at the end of primary school, preventing labelling or grouping of pupils.

Nick Brook, deputy general secretary of school leaders' union NAHT, said:

If a baseline assessment is to be a success, it is absolutely critical that it is done right, which is why it's encouraging that so many schools have signed up for the pilot. This will mean that the assessments can be trialled across the full range of provision.

This is important because it will tell us whether the assessment which has been developed works for teachers and children, and what the next steps should be.

Children will be assessed orally through simple, practical tasks which could include counting or describing pictures, activities that are broadly consistent with the types of things that take place in reception classrooms already, and some of which parents already teach their children at home.

Pilots will take place from September, in the first half term of the new academic year. Following feedback from schools, the RBA is scheduled to be rolled out across England from September 2020.

[News story: Accessibility must be at the heart of new transport tech](#)

- new transport technologies could be transformative and empowering for those with mobility issues
- disability organisations the National Autistic Society, Muscular Dystrophy UK, Scope, Blind Veterans UK and Whizz-Kidz on board with principle that future transport must be accessible for all
- the Inclusive Transport Strategy sets out the government's aim to make the entire transport network accessible by 2030

New modes of transport and pioneering technologies should transform travel for older people and those with disabilities, the government has made clear today (14 May 2019). Transport is vital in order to connect people right across the country, but those with disabilities or mobility issues can sometimes face unacceptable barriers to travel.

Speaking at the final media and showcase event for FLOURISH, a self-driving car project in Bristol aimed at improving the mobility of older people and those with mobility-related needs, the Future of Mobility Minister Jesse Norman has set out that new technologies including self-driving vehicles and the increased use of mobile apps have the potential to revolutionise everyday journeys for people with mobility issues, and this must be a key consideration for those companies developing future transport.

In their '[Future of mobility: urban strategy, launched in March 2019](#)', the government declared that transport innovations must be accessible by design in order to empower independent travel, in line with the [2018 Inclusive Transport Strategy](#) which stated that advances in technology should provide opportunities for all. The trend towards ride-sharing, for example, will need to cater for users of wheelchairs and mobility scooters, as well as those who

might not feel comfortable sharing with strangers due to mental health or developmental conditions.

Speaking at the FLOURISH event at the University of Bristol, the Future of Mobility Minister Jesse Norman said:

Self-driving technologies could greatly improve the mobility of vulnerable user groups, helping to address problems of isolation and loneliness across the country.

The needs of older people, and those with visible or hidden disabilities, must be at the heart of all new modes of transport.

This announcement follows the arrival of a range of exciting transport innovations, including the first trials of self-driving vehicles for blind veterans in the world. A joint venture launched by Blind Veterans UK and Aurrigo in April (2019), the self-driving pods are equipped with accessible features including bright colour edges, door openings, and an external sounds system that changes tone and rate when objects in the path are detected.

[Aurrigo and Blind Veterans UK trial](#)

The commitment in the '[Future of mobility: urban strategy](#)' builds on wide-ranging work the government has already undertaken to improve accessibility on public transport, including investing £300 million to make rail stations more accessible for disabled passengers across Britain, and pushing transport operators to meet their legal obligations to design and deliver their services in a genuinely inclusive way. This includes showing greater recognition that less visible disabilities such as autism or dementia can be just as much of a barrier to travel as a visible disability.

In [November 2018, the government also announced a new partnership with the charity Muscular Dystrophy UK \(MDUK\) which will bring Changing Places toilets to the majority of motorway service areas](#) – making journeys easier for disabled people across England.

Ruth Owen OBE, Chief Executive of Whizz-Kidz, said:

Young wheelchair users tell us how important accessible transport is so they can be independent and make the most of their lives, and just how challenging travelling can sometimes be. It's pointless booking a train ticket to go to work or attend a job interview if the right ramp isn't available to get their wheelchair on the train.

Improving accessibility is vital for the companies developing transport in the future if young disabled people are to be included and have access to the travel opportunities many others take for granted.

Jane Harris, Director of External Affairs at the National Autistic Society, said:

For far too many autistic people, going on public transport is overwhelming. Unexpected changes like delays or diversions, loud crowds and bright lights can trigger extreme levels of anxiety. Some people are so worried about this that they sometimes find it difficult to leave the house at all.

The government is right to prioritise making transport accessible for all. This must mean that all future plans, modes of transport and technologies are shaped by the experiences and often hidden needs of autistic people and their families. In particular, technology represents a real opportunity to help autistic people prepare for journeys and deal with unexpected changes, like cancellations.

Rob Burley, Director of Campaigns, Care and Support at Muscular Dystrophy UK, said:

When public transport is inaccessible, it takes away the independence of people living with disabilities. We regularly hear stories about people's terrible experiences, such as being turned away by bus drivers or missing their stop on the train because no one is around to assist. It's not acceptable.

There is still a long way to go until people living with disabilities have full accessibility, but this announcement shows we are heading in the right direction. We welcome the Department for Transport's commitment to making public transport fully accessible by 2030. We, along with our campaigners, look forward to engaging with government to ensure that this happens.

James Taylor, Head of Policy, Campaigns and Public Affairs at disability equality charity Scope said:

Scope welcome this announcement and commitment from the Department for Transport.

For too long disabled people have faced barriers to being able to travel and live independently.

At Scope we know that technology has the potential to transform the world for disabled people and it's absolutely right that all future transport modes and technologies need to be accessible to everyone. However, disabled people must be involved in the design and testing of these technologies if they are to succeed.

A genuinely inclusive transport network is one that makes it much easier for disabled people to get to work, see family, and be part of their community both now and in the future.

Chair of the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee Keith Richards said:

Self-driving vehicles offer increased independence and options for travel but accessibility has to be at the centre of the development of the technology.

The diverse needs of users, both inside and out of the vehicle, need to be considered from the outset as not everyone will react to an automated vehicle in the same way. People with hearing or visual disabilities for example need to be properly recognised and safeguarded.

Miles Garner, Sales and Marketing Director at Aurrigo, said:

Independence, that's what it is all about. From giving it back to people with a disability to making sure elderly individuals maintain it.

That's why we wholeheartedly welcome the government's Inclusive Transport Strategy and determination to make the entire transport network accessible by 2030. Our driverless pods have a crucial role to play in this, especially in providing first and last mile transport solutions – so crucial to providing a joined-up service.

Case studies

Case study: FLOURISH

[FLOURISH is a multi-sector collaboration, helping to advance the successful implementation of connected and autonomous vehicles \(CAVs\) in the UK](#), by developing services and capabilities that link user needs and system requirements, maximising the benefits of CAVs for users and transport authorities.

The 3 year project was worth £5.5 million and was co-funded between industry and the Centre for Connected and Autonomous Vehicles (CCAV). It was delivered in partnership with Innovate UK. It is part of the government's £100 million Intelligent Mobility Fund, supporting the '[Future of mobility grand challenge](#)', which aims to make everyday transport more accessible and reliable for passengers.

FLOURISH adopted a user-focused approach to best understand consumer expectations of CAV technology. The project explored how this technology can

be harnessed to enhance and enable mobility for older adults and those with mobility-related conditions, contributing to the development of a stronger and more inclusive society. Participants were involved through workshops, and simulator and pod trials.

To [learn more about the technology required to realise these user benefits go to the FLOURISH website](#)

Case study: assist-Mi

Developed by a Sunderland-based company, assist-Mi is an assistance app that offers help to disabled users on the go, giving them more independence when accessing everyday goods and services.

Using a unique combination of location-based technologies and two-way messaging, assist-Mi removes traditional barriers by connecting the user directly with service providers to request real-time assistance at the touch of a button.

Case study: Humanising Autonomy

One of the UK companies helping to ensure self-driving vehicles are safe is Humanising Autonomy. Their technology is able to predict pedestrian intent across multiple cultures and urban contexts, improving interactions between self-driving vehicles and people and ultimately making self-driving vehicles safer.

They are designing their technology with the most vulnerable road users in mind: older people, disabled people, and children.